

Brief Notes

Something for nothing is contrary to the laws both of nature and grace.

They who expect to get to heaven cheaply should not be disappointed if they found a cheap heaven.

Eternal life is the gift of God, but at the same time the man who wanted the pearl of great price sold all he had to get it.

The highest estimate of salvation falls far below the reality, but judging by the lives of some church people one would conclude that there wasn't much to be either gained or lost.

Sacrifice is the index of love. When we see a man doing, suffering, giving and spending for Christ, we conclude that in spite of the errors of his creed, the love of God has been shed abroad in his heart some how.

The man who steadily advertises that he is holier, more obedient, nearer the Bible, safer in doctrine and sounder in practice than everybody else, ought to have a fellow feeling for the man who said: "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are."

The dove will have to give up her time honored office as the harbinger of peace. The German army has 200,000 trained pigeons, and the French army 250,000. These are intended for service in war, and in many ways can be employed so as to facilitate the slaughter of an enemy.

The recent money panic in New York illustrates the insecurity of wealth. It has been stated that the losses amounted to one hundred millions. The real facts are, however, that this amount was transferred from the pockets of small dealers to the pockets of the larger. It is a little more astute, a little more refined, but doesn't differ much in principle from the old predatory barbarism. Fortunately for the world, the Wall Street operators are unable to corner the gold of Revelation 3:18.

As a consequence of British defeats in the Transvaal, the whole Empire is aroused, and tremendous exertions are being made to send large armies into the field. War is a conflagration, and "behold what a great matter a little fire kindleth." There are many who expect to see this particular blaze involve half the world before it is extinguished.

The Holland submarine boat is a fearful engine of naval warfare invented by an American, and purchased by the government. It can steal along far under the surface, approach a warship unobserved, launch a deadly torpedo against its sides, and sink it to the bottom of the ocean. If all that is claimed for it turns out to be true in actual warfare, it will be called "The peacemaker," as no navy would dare to go out against it. Perhaps universal peace will yet be brought about by the invention of irresistible war engines.

After fifty years separation, two brothers and a sister accidentally discover each other, and have a happy Christmas reunion. The brother love and sister love survived all these years of separation, although each of them was ignorant of it, and ignorant of the other's existence. Is God's love less? Verily no. It yearns over all his children, over those who are estranged from him, as well as those who know him. And the day comes on apace, when for many souls that estrangement comes to an end, and the reunited Father and child makes joy on earth and in heaven.

A hotel built on a great rock at Amalfi, Italy, 230 feet above the sea, suddenly slid, rock and all, into the ocean a few weeks ago, crushing houses and ships, and carrying many lives to an awful destruction. It was one of those inexplicable events which look like a special judgment of God. It seemed so solid, this great rock, and no one dreamed that it was unstable, and would one day rush down into the depths below. It is a type of many a strong looking

structure of worldly fame, or wealth, in which the possessor seems so secure, until "sudden destruction cometh, and that without a remedy." It is important to lay our foundations upon the right kind of rock, and we know of only one kind that is indestructible, and that shall never be moved. What rock is that?

A recent decree of a court pronounced upon a woman that she was a spendthrift, and appointed a conservator to take care of her remaining property. There are other spendthrifts who ought to have some one with authority appointed over them to stay the hand of ruin upon them. Those for example who waste their time, waste all their precious opportunities, waste their talents, waste all of God's gifts meant by their proper use to make them richer for time and eternity. Oh! the mental, moral and spiritual spendthrifts there are in the world.

A competition between two whisky houses in Maysville, Ky., makes whisky almost as cheap as water in that town, and the account states that the police courts are reaping a rich harvest. Whisky and crime occupy the close and intimate relations of cause and effect, and alongside of the proverbial reputation of Kentucky as a whisky manufacturing and whisky drinking community, is its other reputation for murder and crime. The two are a congenial pair. They march arm in arm down thru the red fields of human slaughter, and into the nethermost hell where the victims of the saloon are a multitude which no man can number.

The British defeats in South Africa are said to be due to the old methods of fighting, which are not at all adapted to the new guns, with which the Boers seem to be so handy. Whatever the field of conflict, be it martial, material or moral, one must have sense enough to adapt his methods to existing conditions. If we fight stupidly, first thing we know like the red coats we will be on the run. We must be crafty, and catch the enemy with guile. Paul himself is the author of these tactics, but we seem a long time learning how to use them. Aggressive religion is largely a question of brains. Pastors should study the up-to-date elements of military tactics.

The newspapers give an account of a case of insanity which was recently cured by starvation. The patient went forty-five days without food, and was wholly restored to soundness of mind. Perhaps the same sort of treatment would be good for some cases of spiritual insanity. For example, let the patient be cut off from the usually too abundant supply of worldly pleasures, or worldly success, or self-indulgence. Let him have a good stiff dose of starvation along these lines, and in numerous cases it will bring about a condition of spiritual sanity, and give the soul a good appetite for the bread of life.

A pastor in New Brunswick, New Jersey has made a brand new and a very practical application of the parable of the talents. To each member of the church, the treasurer gives a dollar, or two dollars, or five, as the circumstances seem to indicate, and at once opens an account accordingly. At the end of sixty days he calls them to the account, when they must return the "talents" which were loaned to them, and such additional "talents" as they have "gained by trading." The scheme worked wonders. It paid off the church debt in an amazingly short time, and pastor and people are jubilant over the result. We would like to see it tested by some of our enterprising churches. It looks like a very bright idea.

A Vanderbilt baby was recently christened with much pomp and ceremony. The room of the mansion in which the christening took place was decorated with evergreens and cut flowers. The corner occupied by the clergyman was almost hidden by palms. A golden bowl contained the consecrated water. After the christening, the parents held an informal reception. We don't read of anything like it in the New Testament, but they were a long ways behind the times in those days. A baby so well started ought to have a prosperous journey, and indeed we hope it will, but it will be in spite of her

great peril of unlimited wealth, and the self-indulgence which wealth fosters. Better have the golden bowl and the palms at the end of its journey than at the beginning.

Literary Notes

"Let There Be Light"

The Story of a Workingmen's Club, its search for the causes of poverty and social inequality, its discussions, and its plans for amelioration.

DAVID LUBIN

Six workingmen, experiencing the evils and imperfections of the industrial and social conditions under which they labor, meet to discuss those conditions and to seek the causes of those evils. They first discuss our government; next they proceed to the industrial and social question. They compare the competitive system with socialism, and for the ills disclosed they find no remedy that will stand the test of reason. Their investigations lead them to the conclusion that the causes of the inequality of which they feel the burden are to be sought in the defects of religious systems. Religious themes thus become the burden of discussion, and all these humble searchers after truth,—American, German, Russian, Irish, Italian, African, Roman Catholic, Jew, Presbyterian, Baptist, Unitarian, and Free Thinker,—contribute each his own racial and denominational treatment of the themes debated.

In the meantime, the workingmen have organized themselves into a club. Two of the members have, by accident, enlisted the interest of a young man of wealth and leisure, into whose house their work has called them. He and his young wife read with surprise a report of a club debate. They see opened before them a new field of labor and investigation. They broach the subject to their uncle, an elderly man, wealthy, hard headed, practical, and to his wife. The workingmen's discussions are re-discussed by these four, who make their own investigations of the things under consideration.

Common interests and mutual interchange of opinion bring the workingmen into closer relations with the four people of wealth. The debates disclose truths which crystallize into practical form. The truth-seekers, rich and poor, consecrate themselves to the principles which they find revealed, and believe that their discoveries will lead to tangible and potent changes in the world of economics and religion. They formulate their beliefs, they devise methods of promulgating and perpetuating them, and they deliver to the world a plan for a new church, an outline of a new social order.

This book, which follows somewhat the schemes of Samuel Help's *Friends in Council* and of Cicero's *Disputations*, is notable for its originality, logic, and boldness. While seemingly innovatory and destructive, it is in reality catholic and originally constructive, and can be accepted by the most conservative man or woman of the twentieth century. The reasoning is such as to be readily understood by the critical as well as by the scholar; the conclusions are such as to startle and possibly to antagonize every person who believes himself to have come to a final conclusion in economics or religion.

The writer of the book, Mr. David Lubin, is by no means unknown to the general public of the United States. He is a merchant of California; a large employer of labor; a man of high commercial standing, who has an extensive acquaintance with agricultural affairs. In his public life, he is best known as advocating the plan of placing upon agricultural exports an export bounty, to offset, in favor of the farmer, the support to manufacturers given by import duties. This measure, as urged by him, has held the attention of Congress in several sessions, and has attracted notice in this country and in England. He is known as an incisive thinker and a fearless advocate of his beliefs.

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